

To Mrs. Henry Vincent  
England.

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New York, Dec. 31, 1878.

My dear Mrs. Vincent:

I have been in this city for the past ten days, in order to join in the festivities of Christmas and New Year's Day with my beloved daughter and her family. On this last day of the expiring year your pathetic and most touching letter of the 19th instant, concerning the serious illness of your very dear and warmly cherished husband, and a cable telegram in this morning's Tribune announcing his death, are simultaneously received, to my great distress of mind and the heartfelt sorrow of all my children, who hold him in most affectionate remembrance, and for whom he always manifested an almost paternal regard. You will need no assurance from me that I participate in your sudden and sharp bereavement, and that of your sorrowing children, with all



possible sympathy for you and them, and with all the emotions which an ardent friendship extending through nearly twoscore years, and deepening with the lapse of time, naturally awakens. I know your rare strength of mind, and somewhat of your powers of endurance under grievous trials, yet you have been called to experience no such blow as this; for the closest and most susceptible of all earthly ties are those which are entwined around truly wedded souls. And yours was such a marriage - alas! too rarely found. I can only hope and pray that you may be abundantly strengthened and sustained in this great exigency by those consolations which even death itself affords by remembering that it is in itself no evil, but a merciful provision, whereby the gateway to a future life is opened, and unending progress in all that is noble and glorious made possible. You will also be greatly comforted by a retrospective view of your wedded life, covering as it did so long a period, and



attended as it was by so many blessings and enjoyments, making home "the dearest spot on earth," and radiant with light and love.

True, you had to encounter many vicissitudes, and again and again to drink of the bitter cup of affliction; but these only served to weld your hearts more firmly together, and to test the enduring nature of your affection for each other. It is not for me to depict the strength of your love for him who was so well deserving of it; but I remember with special gratification, when he was under my roof, and on other occasions on both sides of the Atlantic, how often he ingenuously spoke of you with a respect bordering on reverence, an admiration reaching a lofty height, a sympathy in your periods of physical debility or mental distress deeper than words could express, and a fondness as though you had but recently been betrothed. And how all his children nestled in the very core of his heart! What a husband for you! what a father for them!



But, while he held you all in the arms of his love as in no other case, he had a cosmopolitan spirit which took into its sympathies the oppressed and down-trodden of the whole human race, and was a brave and eloquent champion in the cause of freedom, peace, temperance, education, reform, and progress—

"Still bearing up his lofty brow

In the steadfast strength of truth,  
In manhood sealing well the vow  
And promise of his youth."

To you and yours his loss<sup>is</sup> irreparable; but in other directions it is one to be greatly lamented. Covering nearly forty years as a public speaker, he discussed many topics of historical interest and importance, besides lending his effective aid to various local struggles for the advancement of justice and equal rights, and became an educator of the people on an extended scale. How he will be remembered by the hundreds of thousands who have listened to his stirring appeals!



The last letter I received from him was dated "Ossett, near Leeds, Oct. 9th, 1878," in which he informed me of the death of our mutual friend and co-worker, George Thompson—adding, "To him I owe not a little of the enthusiasm by which I have been helped onward in my humble career; for when I was a boy in Hull, he filled me with holy zeal, and fascinated me by his weird-like declamation against slavery and the slave trade, and roused me to bear my part in the conflict for social, intellectual, and political progress." He concluded with the following prophetic sentence:—"He only precedes us a little in the eternal pathway to the Higher Life." Let us cherish the hope and belief that these attached friends and eloquent advocates have greeted each other on a higher plane of existence, fully delivered from every drawback upon their faculties and powers, and ready joyfully to "run the race set before them."



It appears by your letter that the dear sufferer, while lying "sick unto death," had his thoughts turned to me and my children, and wished us to be assured of his loving remembrances. This is truly affecting, and thoroughly characteristic of the strong adhesiveness of his friendship.

The sustaining reflection is, that this separation is only for a comparatively brief period, even at the longest:—

"For the truer life draws nigher

Every year;

And its Morning Star climbs higher

Every year;

And Earth's hold on us grows slighter,

And the heavy burden lighter,

And the Dawn Immortal brighter

Every year."

Believe me, in all your sorrows  
as well as joys, your tried friend,  
Wm. Lloyd Garrison.